

Deuteronomy 22 - Thursday, October 27th, 2011

(1) "You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. (2) And if your brother *is* not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. (3) You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother's, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you must not hide yourself. (4) "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift *them* up again.

- Moses begins by addressing the matter of doing absolutely nothing about a sheep or a donkey, that belongs to someone else, going astray.
- He also deals with the issue of finding something that belongs to someone else. In other words, you can't say "finders keepers, losers weepers."
- The common denominator in all of this is the sin of "omission," meaning that we sin by what we omit as opposed to sinning by what we commit.

James 4:17 NIV Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

- In the book of Exodus, we have a similar passage that sort of raises the bar, in that it has to do with not just brothers, but with enemies as well.

Exodus 23:4-5 NIV (4) "If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him. (5) If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help him with it.

Matthew 7:12 NIV So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

(5) "A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all who do so *are* an abomination to the LORD your God.

- This verse would seem to indicate that cross dressing has been around since the beginning. Here, we're given the "why" behind the "what" of it.
- Simply put, it is an abomination to the Lord our God. OK, that's what it is, but why is it an abomination to the Lord? Because of what it can do.
- It can create a gender confusion, which can lead to a confused gender attraction, which can then lead to perverted practices to man's own peril.

(6) "If a bird's nest happens to be before you along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, with the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young; (7) you shall surely let the mother go, and take the young for yourself, that it may be well with you and *that* you may prolong *your* days.

- This has to do with the issue of animal cruelty, which is interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that God loves His creation.
- While man has dominion over animals, man does not have license to be cruel to animals. People who are mean to animals, are mean to people.
- One commentator suggests that this also speaks to how kindness in small matters speaks to one's ability to be gentle in the weightier matters.

Another commentator had some great insight on the letting go of the mother bird when he wrote; "Partly for the bird's sake, which suffered enough by the loss of its young; ...God would not have cruelty exercised towards the brute creatures; and partly for men's sake, to restrain their greediness and covetousness, that they should not monopolize all to themselves, but might leave the hopes of a future seed for others."

- One more thought before we move on to verse eight; notice that God takes this seriously enough to say that man's well being will depend on it.
- If we're kind to the least and smallest bird, God will look upon it favorably, and it will be well with me, and God will bless all the days of my life.

Proverbs 12:10 NIV A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel.

(8) "When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it.

- This speaks to the issue of providing safety measures in the building of one's house specifically related to the railing around a rooftop deck.
- Actually, this brings up an interesting point, and one for which I have taken notice of, as of late, in this "law suit happy" world in which we live.
- Here's what I'm thinking; God wants us to provide safety measures because he doesn't want anyone injured, we want it so no one sues us.
- At first glance, one might think it odd that we have something as seemingly insignificant as safe building codes here in the pages of Holy Writ.
- However, upon further examination one will conclude that there's certainly more here than meets the eye, especially in its meaning spiritually.
- I would submit to you that this has profound personal application in how we too must have safety railings built around our lives and our families.

Charles Spurgeon - "This careful command clearly shows us that God holds life to be very valuable, and that, as he would not permit us to kill by malice, so he would not allow us to kill by negligence, but would have us most tender of human lives. ... But, if ordinary life be precious, much more is the life of the soul, and, therefore, it is our Christian duty never to do that which imperils either our own or other men's souls. To us there is an imperative call from the great Master that we care for the eternal interests of others, and that we, so far as we can, prevent their exposure to temptations which might lead to their fatal falling into sin.... in a spiritual sense, with regard to himself, SO OUGHT EACH MAN TO CARRY OUT THE RULE WITH REGARD TO HIS FAMILY."

- I find it interesting, though this chapter seems discombobulated and all over the place, how that there's a common theme in all that Moses says.
- God wants us to know that He cares about every small and even insignificant detail of our lives, and in so doing, demonstrates His love for us.
- Jesus echoed this in His sermon where He talks about God caring for, the feeding of the smallest birds, and clothing of the smallest flowers.

Matthew 6:26-30 NIV Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? (27) Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? (28) "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. (29) Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. (30) If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

(9) "You shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled. (10) "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. (11) "You shall not wear a garment of different sorts, *such as* wool and linen mixed together.

- Here again we have another example of something that could be considered insignificant, yet it carries with it a powerful application to our lives.
- Just as the Israelites were not to mix it up with the Canaanite customs and practices so too would we do well to do the same in being set apart.
- Also, this carries with it the thought of having magic formulas, in that the mixing together was for the purpose of having good luck in the occult.

- With Halloween coming up on Monday, I would probably be remiss were I not to mention a couple of thoughts about this so called "holiday."
- Make no mistake about it, Halloween is satanic in every sense of the word, and you would be hard pressed to find anything more evil than this.
- It's important to understand that there have been cases of human sacrifices on Halloween, and people only see it as a harmless time of fun.

Chuck Missler of Koinonia House in an article titled; "An Invitation to the Occult?" had this to say: "This is always a difficult time for Christians, especially those with children. It has been suggested that for a Christian to be asked to celebrate Halloween is like asking a Holocaust survivor to celebrate Hitler's birthday! It is also a dangerous time for some, since many of the seemingly "harmless" involvements associated with Halloween can also be "entries" for the occult, and can prove very tragic for the unwary. ... Halloween practices can open the door to the occult and can introduce forces into people's lives that they are not equipped to combat. There is genuine power in the occult, but it is *demonic* power. Any serious study of Biblical demonology will reveal Satan as the power behind false religion, witchcraft, idolatry and the occult. The Word of God makes it clear that these are all to be shunned as dangerous. There were many superstitions and false concepts in ancient Israel about which the Bible is silent. However, occultism, in any form, was punishable by death! Why? The spiritual power and reality behind idols involves demons. The Bible commands us to shun occult practices. Mediums and spiritists are expressly prohibited. Nowhere are such practices acceptable."

(12) "You shall make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover *yourself*.

- I love this about the Word of God, and the God of the Word. Whenever God commands us to not do something, He gives us what to do instead.
- God is saying that instead of doing what the pagans do, do this instead; make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you wear.
- We saw this back in our study of Numbers chapter 15:38-40 where the Lord has Moses speak to the children of Israel about these tassels.

Numbers 15:38-40 NKJV "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. (39) And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you *may* not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, (40) and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God.

- These blue tassels on the corners of their garments was God's way of graciously reminding them to keep looking up towards heaven instead.
- It's as if God wants them to know that He loves them, and is merciful to them in that He wants them to focus on Him in heaven and not on earth.
- What's sad about this is that their doing this became such an outward show that in the New Testament, Jesus had to rebuke their hypocrisy.

Matthew 23:5-7 NIV "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; (6) they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; (7) they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them "Rabbi."

(13) "If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her, (14) and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she *was* not a virgin,' (15) then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out *the evidence* of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. (16) And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her. (17) Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter *was* not a virgin," and yet these *are the evidences* of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. (18) Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him; (19) and they shall fine him one hundred *shekels* of silver and give *them* to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days. (20) "But if the thing is true, *and evidences* of virginity are not found for the young woman, (21) then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. So you shall put away the evil from among you.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment on this one because it's passages like this one that remind us just how far away from God man is.
- Let me explain; this passage is dealing with a woman who lies about being a virgin before she is married, and what they were to do about it.
- Conversely, if a man falsely accused the woman of not being a virgin when they got married when she was, that was to be dealt with as well.

- Now, here's my point, and yes I do have one as a matter of fact; by today's standards, how absurd would this be in the marriages of our day.
- To say it another way, this wouldn't even be on the same planet when you think about how far away from God's commands man has gone.
- Lest you think that this is a case for stoning the bride for fornication, and fining the groom for a false accusation, consider the ramification.

- Could it be that God was protecting them from the deadly consequences of sexually transmitted diseases in their immorality and promiscuity?
- Could it be that God was protecting them from the life-long consequences of an unhealthy sexual relationship in their perversion and distortion?
- Could it be that God was protecting them from the life -filled consequences of destruction in their minds psychologically and hearts emotionally?

(22) "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

- Moses is rounding a corner and addressing the matter of adultery, and you'll notice that both the man and the woman were to be put to death.
- In other words, there was not to be a double-standard, as it were, and what was good for the goose, was also good for the gander as they say.

(23) "If a young woman *who is* a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, (24) then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you.

- Now Moses will address the matter of rape but he qualifies it by saying that if the woman doesn't cry out in the city, she is to be put to death too.
- If you're scratching your head on this one, hang on because it should come into clearer focus in the verses that we will read next...

(25) "But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. (26) But you shall do nothing to the young woman; *there is* in the young woman no sin *deserving* of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so *is* this matter. (27) For he found her in the countryside, *and* the betrothed young woman cried out, but *there was* no one to save her. (28) "If a man finds a young woman *who is* a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, (29) then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.

- The difference here is that the young woman is not in the city, and thus, even if she were to cry out, nobody would have heard her anyway.
- The other woman not crying out in the city would seem to infer that she was complicit in the sexual sin which explains why she was put to death.

(30) "A man shall not take his father's wife, nor uncover his father's bed.

- I don't like ending a Bible study with a verse like this dealing with incest! Be that as it may, it does speak to the prevalence of man's perversion.
- In the hopes of offering a much needed perspective at this point, maybe it would be good to see this as a warning from a loving heavenly father.
- Moses is preparing them for that which is being prepared for them as they enter the Promised-Land, and this is what they would be up against.